

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed April 21, 2005 has been carefully considered.
Reconsideration in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Applicant hereby requests acknowledgement of the Information Disclosure Statement filed April 25, 2001.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication of allowance of claim 8, 18, 23, and 24 subject to their re-writing in independent form. Claims 1 and 11 have been rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of dependent claims 23 and 24 as suggested by the Examiner.

Claims 7, 17, and 21-24 have been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein.

Information Disclosure Statement

Acknowledgement of the Information Disclosure Statement filed on April 25, 2001 is respectfully requested.

Certified Priority Document

Acknowledgement of the foreign priority document filed on April 25, 2001 is respectfully requested

Rejection under 35 USC §103(a) – claims 1-7, 9-17, and 20-22

Claims 1-7, 9-17, and 20-22 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Takebayashi (US 4,783,802) in view of Bossemeier, Jr. (US 6,012,027) of which Claims 1 and 11 are independent claims. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As suggested by the Examiner, Claims 23 and 24 are allowable subject to their re-writing in independent form. Thus, Claims 1 and 11 have been amended to include the limitations of Claims 23 and 24, respectively. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

As to dependent claims 2-6, 9, 10, 12-16, and 20, the argument set forth above is equally applicable here. The base claims being allowable, the dependent claims must also be allowable.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully asserted that the claims are now in condition for allowance.

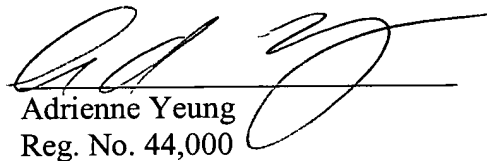
Conclusion

It is believed that this Amendment places the above-identified patent application into condition for allowance. Early favorable consideration of this Amendment is earnestly solicited.

If, in the opinion of the Examiner, an interview would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the number indicated below.

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. Please charge any additional required fee or credit any overpayment not otherwise paid or credited to our deposit account No. 50-1698.

Respectfully submitted,
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